



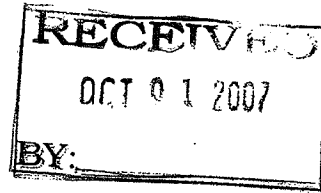
COUNTY OF SAN BENITO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

L 011

481 Fourth St • Hollister, CA 95023
Phone: 831-636-4000 • Fax: 831-636-4010

Don Marcus, District No. 1
Anthony Botelho, District No. 2
Pat Loe, District No. 3
Reb Monaco, District No. 4
Jaime De La Cruz, District No. 5

September 26, 2007



California High-Speed Train
California High-Speed Rail Authority
Draft Program ERI/EIS Comments
925 L Street Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Comments regarding the Draft Bay Area to Central Valley High-Speed Train (HST) Program EIR/EIS

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed California High-Speed Train project. On behalf of the San Benito County Board of Supervisors, we wish to express significant concerns regarding the DEIR/DEIS for the proposed project and question the overall necessity of the project.

The proposed California High-Speed Train project would link the Bay Area, Central Valley, Sacramento, and southern California. As we understand it, the study region is bounded by the following: Pacheco Pass to the south, the Altamont Pass to the north, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad Company to the east, and the Caltrain Corridor to the west. The two preferred alternatives are San Jose to Central Valley via Pacheco Pass, and East Bay to Central Valley via Altamont Pass.

L011-1

Potential Environmental Impacts to San Benito County:

Proximity to San Felipe Lake (Soap Lake) and other properties

- *If the Pacheco Pass alternative is chosen, the route would lie approximately parallel to Highway 152, with San Felipe Lake lying between the proposed route and the County line. This area is mapped as lying entirely within the Flood Plain. Furthermore, the potential impacts to the Pajaro River need to be considered.*

L011-2

Sensitive Habitat Area(s)

- *Portions of the proposed project have been identified as lying within critical habitat of the California Tiger Salamander, as listed in the Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Register. (Please refer attached map)*

L011-3

Traffic Increase

- *The proposed High-Speed Train project has the potential to create a substantial amount of vehicle traffic originating from the Monterey County area. Highways 101, 152, 25, and 156 are currently under tremendous capacity strain. The proposed rail project has the potential to substantially increase these strains. Analysis should be provided to determine the potential for increased traffic within our County for this project.*

L011-4

Air pollution

- *San Benito County is under the jurisdiction of the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District. The proposed project is located in the North Central Coast Air Basin, which consists of Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties. The North Central Coast Air Basin is currently classified as "in attainment/unclassified" for all current federal air quality standards. San Benito County is classified "Attainment" for State ambient air quality standards, fine particulate matter. It is classified "Non-attainment" for ozone and respirable particulate matter, and "Unclassified" for carbon monoxide. Consideration should be given to the potential for lower air quality and attainment status within our County due to increased traffic to the proposed Gilroy station by populations to the South of San Benito County.*

L011-5

Farmland Impacts

- *The proposed project could convert Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Farmland of Local Importance, as shown on California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection maps. Consideration should be given to the conversion of this Farmland to non-agricultural use.*

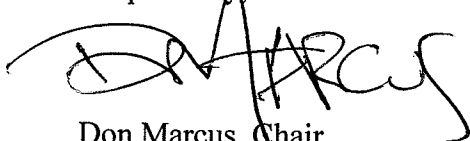
L011-6

Potential Financial Impacts to San Benito County:

Our Board has significant concerns about the financial cost of this project. We are opposed to any diversion of State tax dollars away from badly needed community items, such as local transportation projects and homeless shelters.

L011-7

Respectfully,



Don Marcus, Chair
San Benito County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Board of Supervisors

CAO

Association of Monterey Bay Governments (AMBAG)

Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District

Map 20. Central Population of California Tiger Salamander
East Bay Region, Units 9, 10a, 10b, 11, 12

